

CLAIMS

- 1) A process for the preparation of tomato whole extracts with lycopene content from 5% to 20% and with reducing sugars content expressed as glucose lower than 1%, comprising the following steps:
- pretreating fresh tomatoes, which comprises washing, then cutting or crushing;
 - heat concentrating of the cut or crushed tomato from step a);
 - extracting the concentrate from step b) with water-saturated ethyl acetate;
 - backwashing the extract from step c) with water;
 - concentrating the extract to dryness under reduced pressure.
- 2) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the concentration of the extract according to step e) is carried out to a final volume ranging from 0.10 to 0.28% with respect to the starting volume, further comprising the following steps:
- filtering and drying the lycopene precipitated from the concentrate; and optionally suspending lycopene in ethanol or ethyl acetate, then filtering and washing with ethyl acetate until obtaining the desired purity;
 - adding seed oil to lycopene from step f).
- 3) A process as claimed in claim 2, wherein the seed oil is tomato seed oil.
- 4) A process as claimed in claim 2, wherein the seed oil is soybean oil.
- 5) Tomato whole extracts with lycopene content from 5% to 20% and with content in reducing sugars, expressed as glucose, lower than 1%, obtainable with the process of claim 1.